

CITIZEN CENTRES

for

ADULT EDUCATION

Foreword by
SIR RICHARD LIVINGSTONE

SIXPENCE

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CITIZEN CENTRES for Adult Education

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FOREWORD

By Sir Richard Livingstone

WE have realized that education has little value if it ceases at 14. An absurdity and a disaster in our education is about to disappear. But another, not less serious, remains. Education cannot be completed by 18 or 21, and by failing to provide adequate facilities for its continuance, we deny in practice what we affirm in words, that it is a life-long process. One of the chief problems of the day is to make it life-long. Opportunities for systematic adult study are needed on a wide scale, and these must not be limited to lectures or classes given in any hall or schoolroom that happens to be available. They must have a "local habitation", a focus in the Latin sense of the word, a hearth where the fire remains continually lit, and where education can be more than isolated individual study and becomes a life shared with others. The Educational Settlements which have grown up during the century show how such a hearth can be provided. A main line of advance lies through them and in this pamphlet the author points it out.

CITIZEN CENTRES

for

Adult Education

The next twenty years

THE twenty years before the war were years of recurrent crises, which grew ever graver until they culminated in the present holocaust. The most earnest efforts—and many were made—to preserve peace proved powerless to prevent the steady drift to war.

What lies before us in the next twenty years? That depends largely upon ourselves. We recognize the absolute necessity for reshaping the social and international orders. We are already making strenuous attempts to do so. But are we yet properly equipped for the task? The most sanguine among us would hardly dare to answer with an unqualified yes.

We in this country pin our faith to the democratic way of life. If we are to achieve this in all its fullness, it is essential that every grown man and woman among us shall play a creative and constructive part in the building and maintenance of our community life and in the control of our national and international affairs. It would be idle to pretend that every man and woman does so at present, or is capable of doing so. In fact, very few of us do play any creative or even active part in the governance and direction of public affairs.

We rightly dread the thought of totalitarianism in any shape or form. But it is imperative to realize that, unless we consciously and clearsightedly plan for democracy and freedom, totalitarianism will certainly overwhelm us. During the past century invention has placed at the disposal of man

a series of instruments—the turbine and the internal combustion engine, the telegraph and the telephone, the radio and the cinema, for example—which has enabled him to build up, and to retain in the hands of the few, immense and terrifying concentrations of power of all kinds—military, political, economic, social. The results of such concentrations are to-day apparent everywhere.

Preventing Totalitarianism

The concentration and control of power in the hands of a few lead insensibly to totalitarianism. How is it to be prevented? Only by the education of the many to take their share in control. These instruments we have invented are not in their nature evil. *They are neutral.* They can be used equally for the benefit of mankind as for its destruction. In the hands of the few—eager for their own advantage and careless of the interests of the many—they are almost certain to be used for maleficent purposes; in the hands of the many there is at least the chance that they may be used to further beneficent aims. The more enlightened the many the better the chance that they will be so used. In a community wholly devoted to the democratic ideal, and equipped and trained to preserve it, the chance should be very good.

To avoid a fatal drift to the decadence of totalitarianism (a way of life which however benevolently directed is always decadent) our task must be to enable *all* the people of this country to rise to creative and constructive citizenship, so that together, in a community of partnership, they may work out the democratic ideal in the whole structure of our society.

This must be done within the next twenty years. We cannot wait for our children to do it. We cannot even hand over the full responsibility for doing it to those among us who are yet young, who still stand on the threshold of manhood and womanhood. Everyone among us, young, middle-aged, and old, must be prepared to do his or her share.

We are not at present fit to do so. We must be made fit. The fullest possible opportunities for adult education must without delay be made available for all. This is a

first priority. Reforms in primary, secondary, and continued education for the child and the adolescent are very rightly being actively promoted. It is deplorable to think how much we have lost already by leaving the mass of our population without education after 14, how much by not putting into force the provisions of the Fisher Act for part-time education. But the results of these reforms cannot in the nature of things do much to influence the course of events during the next twenty years. Even were the large, generous and imaginative measures of reforms in the education of the young which are embodied in the new Education Act to be carried out at top speed (and this, unhappily, is by no means certain yet to be the case), it would still be from ten to fifteen years before the first young people who had materially benefited from the new order in education would begin to exercise an effective influence on the direction of our national and international affairs. We must equip the present generation of grown-ups for their tasks by making nation-wide provision for adult education.

Extreme Urgency

This last provision is the most urgent. It is upon the twenty-two million of us who are already adult that the success or failure of the post-war social order will depend. Success or failure will depend, first, upon our outlook and our understanding, and secondly upon our capacity to translate our vision into terms of action.

The Prime Minister has outlined a Four-Year Plan of social reconstruction. It may not be the ideal plan. Many people feel it does not go far or fast enough in the direction of progress. But it certainly represents an important step forward. Can it be carried out? Not unless it has the full backing and support, and the *informed and intelligent co-operation* of the whole of the adult population.

The backing and support can be relied upon; the informed and intelligent co-operation cannot. That can only be secured if we are prepared to undertake such provision of adult education as will enable us to understand and to deal

with the political, social and economic problems with which we are and shall be faced.

Can this be done ? If we are unwilling to think outside the somewhat narrow limits within which adult education has hitherto been developed in this country, NO. If on the other hand we are prepared to think creatively and to act confidently, the answer is certainly YES.

We shall not have to start from scratch. On the contrary, we have a rich field of experience to draw upon. A wide variety of experiments in different forms of adult education, carried out by such bodies as the Extra-Mural Departments of the Universities and the Workers' Educational Association, over the past forty years indicate some of the lines of development. During the war new and most valuable experiments have been made in H.M. Forces. There, for the first time, many thousands of men and women have been awakened to the importance and to the possibilities of education during the years of maturity. Similar experience has been gained in the adult education of civilians, among whom also there have been notable experiments.

If we combine the experience of the pre-war years with that of the years of war and allow the light of creative imagination to play upon both we shall not find the problems of the next twenty years insoluble.

Difficulties to be overcome

The immediate provision of a nation-wide scheme of adult education is no impracticable dream, though it is obvious that there are many difficulties to be overcome. The first practical difficulty with which we are faced is that of buildings. If we are to have a nation-wide scheme of adult education, it is clear we must have a nation-wide provision of centres in which it can be carried on. These centres will have to be of two kinds : residential colleges for full-time education—institutions to which men and women can go for uninterrupted periods of study ranging from one week to, say, two years ; and non-residential institutions, for part-time or leisure-time study. The various problems

inherent in the provision of the residential college have already been examined in the pamphlet "People's Colleges for Residential Education",* and so need not further occupy us here. Our concern is with the non-residential institution.

A communal hearth

Two points about this should be made at the outset. First, the non-residential institution is essentially a local institution, and, second, to be effective for the purpose of developing creative citizenship it must be in the nature of a home rather than a school. It should be a cross between a college and a club. It will do for the adult what the good school does for the child, but it must do this at the adult level and in the adult way.

This rules out at once the exclusive use of schools for this new provision of adult education. Schools are built and equipped for children. They do not offer a suitable environment for the individual and social development of adults. Some of their facilities could, without doubt, be used ; for example, the school hall in a modernly planned school is admirable for public meetings, lectures, concerts and dramatic performances ; and the school gymnasium might well be used (as it often is) for physical training. But total, or even large, reliance upon schools for the purposes of adult education would invite the failure of the scheme.

No doubt an ideal plan for rural areas is the combined school and adult centre such as is to be found in the Cambridgeshire Village Colleges. But it is necessary to take a completely realistic view of the situation, and to admit that, while it might conceivably be possible to erect a network of such centres within the next twenty years, very few could be expected to be forthcoming during the first five years, and probably not many during the first ten. And it is those years which will be crucial. So, while we must have a long-term policy for the ideal, we must have a short-term policy capable

* *People's Colleges for Residential Adult Education*. Foreword by Sir Richard Livingstone. Published by Educational Settlements Association, 8 Endsleigh Gardens, London, W.C.1. Price 6d.

of supplying immediately a sufficiency of improvised accommodation. For the first few years at least it would be necessary to rely upon buildings already in existence.

Experience of the Settlements

How shall the provision be conceived? One of the most helpful pointers in this direction would appear to be the Educational Settlement, of which there are already nearly thirty in existence in England and Wales.

The founders of the educational settlement movement, when they began their first experiments in 1909, were convinced that an imperative task of the time was to integrate the individual with society: to create in him that "awareness" which differentiates the person from the creature, and to quicken and develop the personal life so that it becomes a creative influence in the life of the community.

Clearly, to do this much more was required than attendance once or twice a week at a class or a lecture in a single subject or group of subjects. Integration can only be achieved by a dual process of living and learning. Accordingly, the founders of the movement set out to provide a building which would serve as a common hearth and home for all kinds of students. And it was to be not merely for students only, but for all people engaged in social and educational activities in the neighbourhood, and for all others who might be interested in the project.

Building, staff and equipment

That the building might be capable of carrying out its full social purpose it was thought essential that there should be, in addition to rooms in which groups could meet for lectures and discussions, a common room, a canteen, a library, and if possible a concert hall and theatre. These facilities, it was believed, would offer invaluable means of bringing together men and women of different outlooks and interests, and thus of fertilizing a sense of common purpose. It should not prove difficult in many districts

to find buildings which could be adapted to provide such facilities, but in others co-operation with the publicly provided facilities, e.g. the public library, would be necessary.

Arranging and maintaining a general direction of all the activities of the settlement, there was a warden, resident wherever possible, but in any case living close at hand and devoting his whole time to the work. He would be assisted, where necessary, by a qualified staff, resident or non-resident as suited the circumstances. It was thought desirable also for there to be in some cases other permanent, or semi-permanent, residents—young people who wanted to study social conditions at first hand, or experienced social workers wishing to undertake research studies. There seems no reason why this arrangement should not be retained.

Subject to the general direction of the warden, it was agreed that there must be plentiful opportunity for those who used the settlement to have a responsible share in the arrangement of the educational and social facilities it provided and in its management. The idea was not only to enable students to meet leaders of thought and action in all fields of the national life, and lecturers and tutors in a wide variety of subjects, but also, by giving them a say in all that was done in the place, to develop the capacity for self-government. It is essential to preserve this feature.

Individual and social development

In short, the educational settlement was designed with the aim of providing the kind of environment best calculated to promote both individual and social development ; to stimulate and guide healthy physical and mental growth and civic awareness ; to encourage the acquisition of habits, knowledge, interests, and skill of body and mind necessary for living a full and useful life ; and to evolve standards of conduct, effort and attainment by which personal and social behaviour could be measured. There could be no better description of the aims which should inspire the local centres for adult education which will be required after the war—the citizen centres, as they might well be termed.

Those aims were based upon a firm belief in the ability of the ordinary man and woman and in their capacity to grow mentally ; and in education as a continuous and pre-eminently spiritual process which has the greatest possibilities of realization in circumstances where the graces and the virtues of life are cultivated along with the skills of hand and eye and mind.

As with all human institutions, the aims and ideals of the educational settlement movement have been pursued with varying fidelity and consequently varying success in different places and at different times. But the accumulated experience of over thirty years has been extraordinarily valuable, and in particular has been illuminating in respect of a number of fundamental points upon which it has been shown that success or failure hinges.

Variety of need

From the outset it was felt that care should be taken neither to insist upon rigid adherence to an unvarying pattern nor to allow any degree of stereotyping to take place. Each new settlement founded was encouraged to study, adapt itself to, and keep in close and sympathetic touch with the environment and life of its neighbourhood, and to develop its own life and its work in accordance with the needs and the opportunities thus revealed. The more closely that guiding principle has been followed, the greater and more permanent has been the success of the settlement.

Attention to this principle has, it is interesting to note, been responsible for a duality in the development of the movement as a whole. The original experiments in 1909 were made to meet needs arising out of the existing forms of adult education in England, and generally speaking the English settlements have followed the lines laid down in those early days. But the educational settlements in South Wales were developed to meet needs arising from widespread and prolonged unemployment, exacerbated by the General Strike of 1926. Consequently, while the English settlement has tended to remain primarily a centre gathering to itself a

varied constituency drawn from every part of its neighbourhood and representative of every interest, and so to constitute a largely self-contained unit, the Welsh settlement has become as it were, the hub of a wheel having many spokes reaching out to every point on the circumference. The main work of the Welsh settlement, while inspired and nurtured from the centre, has been conducted in outlying clubs and institutions whose activities ranged from nurseries for infants to circles for grandmothers and grandfathers, from the distribution of clothes to the provision of classes in Greek or Philosophy.

Adequately to meet the needs of the first few years after the war, it would appear probable that there should be a synthesis of the English and the Welsh lines of development ; both a centre which is a hive of varied provision, and numerous " outliers " meeting the special needs of parts of the area.

Starting points

The primary function of any local citizen centre should be the progressive development of the individual as a member of a free society, through mental training, the encouragement of self-effort, and the exercise of personal responsibility. It is essential therefore that the membership be not too large ; otherwise there is the danger of the individual being submerged and lost in the crowd—just the very danger it is most desired to avoid. Experience suggests that between 500 and 600 members is generally the optimum number for a reasonably self-contained centre. This normally gives an average attendance each night of somewhere between 200 and 300 people. The centre with outliers can cater for a considerably larger number.

Education is far too generally thought of as a process suitable only to the young. Actually, while the earlier it can be begun the better, it is a process which can be started at any point in the life of the individual. No one is too old to begin. But once begun, if it is to be of substantial and permanent benefit, it must be both continuous and

progressive. Above all, it must throughout have reference to the actual needs of the student. This being so, the methods employed must at all stages be such as are derived from the nature of the individual and his state of development, and emphatically not such as are derived from the handling of some particular "subject" which somebody feels it is good and necessary for other people to know. At no point is it more essential to have regard to this principle than during the opening stages.

This vital point has in the past been grossly ignored ; with disastrous consequences. There is nothing more calculated to keep adults away from education than the fear that they will have pumped into them something they do not particularly want—especially if that something is held to be necessary for their good. Most adults brought up in relatively free societies strongly resent the idea of being done good to, especially if (as is so often the case) they have reason to be doubtful of the worldly wisdom of those who propose to do them good.

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the adult student is not to be regarded as a mere vessel into which to pour knowledge, however valuable. He is a person with some experience of life and some maturity of judgment. However little of the latter he may in fact possess, it is crucial to remember that for him the free expression of his views (vague and uncritical though these may be), and free and unfettered discussion of the problems which beset him, generally do, and certainly should, constitute a highly important part of the educational process.

In this respect the wartime development of adult education in H.M. Forces has taught us an invaluable lesson. The schemes known as A.B.C.A. (Army Bureau of Current Affairs) and B.W.P. (British Way and Purpose) are based not on a teaching but on a discussional technique. The officers and N.C.O.s who handle the pamphlets which are issued as briefs for these schemes are expected to act as leaders of group discussions, not as instructors, teachers, or even interpreters of some idea the authorities wish to get across. The schemes have been very successful and most of

all where the technique of discussion has been most highly developed.

This is not to suggest that teaching should play no part in the adult education of the future. It must of course play an important and essential part, for no discussion can be profitably conducted save on the assumption of a foundation of factual knowledge. Nevertheless the above points to the principle—axiomatic but so often ignored—that with adults as with children it is imperative to begin at the point where their interests are alive. And this leads to the second principle, that the interests of adults are different from and cannot be treated in the same way as the interests of children.

The importance of environment

All the experience of the educational settlements during the past thirty years goes to prove that informal methods of education, handled by men and women who are sympathetic, responsive to new ideas, and ready to experiment, lead students whose interests are dormant most swiftly and surely to that more formal education which is necessary if study is to be continuous and progressive. It will be of the utmost importance to have regard to this principle in the years after the war, especially during the earlier years, when large numbers of the students who it may be hoped will be attracted will be mentally deadened by the long hours of monotonous labour and the almost complete lack of leisure they will have experienced during the war.

This prompts the thought—which has doubtless already occurred to the mind of the reader—that what is vaguely called “atmosphere” will be all-important in the citizen centres. The first point about this has already been noted; the “local habitation” must be essentially a “home”, and not a “school”, a home in which any and every member of the community is not only welcome but is *significant*; a home where all are equal and in the running of which all take an active and responsible share; a home, in short, which belongs to all, is of the people, by the people, and for the people.

But though without this primary essential no centre can hope to be a success, there are other points the importance of which must neither be neglected nor underestimated. First, the centre should be, if possible, geographically central to the area. Nothing is more deterrent of attendance than difficulty of access. It is true that where distances are for some students bound to be considerable, as they must be in rural areas, a considerably planned transport system is an invaluable help. But in no case should the centre be located in such a way as to give rise to the impression that one part of the area matters more than another. If it is, dwellers in the apparently snubbed districts will respond by non-attendance and a deprecatory attitude.

Second, the building, or buildings, should be attractive, both inside and out. This is not impossible, however improvised the earlier provision may have to be. A coat of paint, or a little careful decoration, can work wonders even with an exterior apparently intended to defy improvement. Rooms can, and should be, well lighted and warmed, and given a homely appearance. Their furnishings and equipment should be the best that can be provided, and in the best taste without necessarily being ultra chromium plated. *The model for their equipment must be always the well planned yet comfortable home, not the educational institution.*

If the library is located in the centre, it should be designed, not on the pattern of the public library, but of the study of the voracious and scholarly reader—without, of course, the litter of untidiness among which so many distinguished scholars love to live and work ! If the accommodation admits of a theatre, however small, this is eminently desirable, but no matter how simple the stage equipment has to be it must be up to date. People simply will not come to partake in the second rate when the first rate is to be obtained a few doors or a street or two away. Needless to say there should be a cinema screen and projector and the hall should be wired for sound films. A radiogram with extensions is essential. The canteen—and every centre should have one—must combine the qualities of competence, cleanliness and attractiveness.

Staffing the Centres

All this brings us right up against the question of the staff. Evidently they, and the warden in particular, will need to have exceptional qualifications. Will it be possible to discover a sufficiency of such men and women? It would be an insult to the nation to suggest that it is impossible; but a caveat must at once be entered. If too much is demanded in the way of paper qualifications, it will certainly be extremely difficult to find the very considerable number of men and women required.

The starting point of the search must be acceptance of the principle that the staff are going to have to deal with men and women, not with subjects to be taught, nor even, if you like, with education. The qualities to be looked for, then, will be essentially human qualities; and academic and administrative qualifications must take a secondary place. This is not to say, of course, that such qualifications should be ignored. The warden, for example, must have considerable capacity as an administrator, and his academic qualifications must be such that he will be able not only to have regard for but also to assess intellectual standards. But it is of the first importance that he or she shall be of absolute integrity, morally courageous, capable of making and keeping friends, and with the capacity to stimulate others to develop their mental and spiritual growth. In short, the warden must be a man or a woman who has discovered a worthwhile purpose in life, is seized with the desire to help others to find their purpose, and has the necessary ability and energy for the task.

There are great numbers of men and women to-day whose experience is qualifying them for such positions. They are to be found, for example, in administrative posts in H.M. forces, in executive posts in the war industries, in charge of workers' hostels, of welfare departments, employment exchanges, citizens' advice bureaux, and training courses of various kinds, both resident and non-resident. They may not all have university degrees—the majority of them probably have not—but they most of them will be found to have a reasonable cultural background. Even where

this (in the ordinary sense) may be lacking, it has to be remembered that wartime experience is very intensive, and that the intelligent and able man or woman can learn a lot in a short time in such conditions.

The qualifications demanded of the staff will be very varied. There will be need for men and women who are teachers in the strictest sense of the term, for there will be some among the students (though probably only a small proportion) who will demand the austerity of intellectual discipline which comes only from the most formal presentation of a subject. There will be need for musicians, play producers, artists and craftsmen ; and here C.E.M.A. may be able to be of the utmost assistance. There will be need for trained librarians, cinema operators, canteen managers, and clerical staff. All these are being produced on a high level (though they are without, perhaps, the normal paper qualifications) by the exigencies of war. Above all there will be need for group leaders, men and women who can initiate and direct discussions of interested if relatively uninformed people. There should be no shortage of such group leaders, for they are being thrown up here, there and everywhere—by A.B.C.A., B.W.P. and other educational schemes in the Forces, in the joint production committees in the factories, in the popular Brains Trusts of civilian life. There will be no shortage, provided we are prepared to select boldly and with imagination, and above all to choose men and women who are not merely purveyors of knowledge.

Some necessary studies

Some indication of the content of the studies to be carried on in a citizen centre will have been gathered from what has already been said in this memorandum. The primary objective of each and every centre will be the study of man in society, with a view to the advancement of co-operative living in a democratic community. This necessarily divides the work to be done into two categories : study and action. The study will be conducted in informal groups and in more formal classes. The obvious subjects are the mother tongue,

spoken and written (with emphasis on the former), literature and the arts, general science—because this is already and will be increasingly a scientific world—politics, economics, sociology, psychology, philosophy, religion, history, and geography. Stated thus baldly, it sounds a formidable list ; but, when they are analysed out, the most conversational discussions having anything more than the most trivial purpose contain elements of all these subjects. If the work done at a centre is progressive it must ultimately arrive at serious and scholarly study of each and every one of these subjects.

Not all students, of course, will be capable of rising to this last level ; and any project for nation-wide adult education which assumes that they can is doomed inevitably to resounding failure. Many students will never reach beyond the level of informed discussion, and most of those who do will be content with quite elementary formal lessons. But it should be possible for every student possessed of ability above the sub-normal to acquire a working knowledge of the structure of society, of its instruments of government, its institutions both statutory and voluntary, and of his rights, privileges and obligations both as an individual citizen and as a member of those particular social and political groupings to which he has attached himself.

But study by itself will not produce the creative and constructive citizen ; it may even tend to be a deterrent to action. It is action based on informed judgment that should be the ultimate objective of every citizen centre. The life of the centre itself, with its communal responsibility, should do something towards producing the active citizen, but clearly it cannot do all. Its scope for action is too restricted. It must therefore be a constant preoccupation of the warden, the staff and all the members of the centre to stimulate everyone capable of assuming a post of civic or national responsibility to do so, and, at times, to help and guide them in their actions when they are in office. The centres should be real foci of the political life of the country. Nor is the matter confined to politics alone ; indeed, so to confine it would be to limit its usefulness in the most

regrettable fashion. In all spheres of the life of society there is urgent need for democratic leaders, men and women who will by bringing the light of their skill and wisdom to bear in a directive or advisory capacity illuminate those spheres for the benefit of their fellow citizens. It should be the business of the centre to set standards of beauty and excellence, to educate men and women to expect and demand beauty in their surroundings and in their daily life, and by the study of great literature and the practise of drama, and music, and crafts to develop their powers of discrimination and appreciation. It should also be the business of the centre to make opportunity in every direction for the development of special aptitudes and interests ; and to inculcate the idea in every one of its members that when developed those aptitudes and interests shall be used for the benefit of all.

Who provides the Centres ?

Who shall provide and maintain these citizen centres ? As units in a national institution they should be entitled to receive financial aid from the central exchequer, and a general directive from the appropriate government department—which is obviously the Ministry of Education. But it would be essential to the whole idea that they should be not merely a local provision but a source of local pride. It should become the tradition that each locality should strive to have the finest and most progressive citizens' centre for adult education in the country. Opinions will vary as to the body which should provide and maintain these centres. An ideal method of provision, it would seem, would be an equal partnership between the local education authority and the voluntary bodies which have played for so long so honourable and so constructive a part in the provision of adult education. It must be admitted, however, that there is something peculiarly attractive to the English mind in the idea of the voluntary provision of a voluntary service ; and the thought of the citizens of a locality contributing, each according to his means, towards the erection and maintenance of a citizen centre is not without its appeal. In this

case there might be a local *ad hoc* committee subject only to the most general approval of its acts and dicts by the local education authority (which as the co-ordinating body for all educational provision in the area must have at least a say in the matter), and at the Ministry of Education a standing committee, responsible to the Minister, who would have regard to its recommendations in planning the necessary national administration. It is eminently desirable that this committee should not be primarily concerned with administration. English education has too long suffered from the fact that the Board of Education has been almost entirely preoccupied with administration. The provision made in the Education Act for Advisory Councils suggests that at long last this mistake is to be rectified.

Cost of provision

It is, of course, impossible to estimate in advance what would be the cost of a nation-wide provision of citizen centres, for it is impossible to estimate the extent to which the idea would catch on, or the nature and diversity of the provision which the localities would deem necessary. Some slight indication may perhaps be gleaned from the fact that the annual cost of maintenance of an educational settlement to-day ranges from £750 to £4000. This would seem to suggest that the minimum annual cost of each centre would be not less than £1,000, and might be considerably more. Assuming in the first instance the provision of one centre per 70,000 of the population in urban areas, and one per 10,000 in the rural areas, this would mean between 500 and 1,000 centres, or an annual cost of between £500,000 and £1,000,000—surely not an excessive sum for so potentially valuable a provision. A rough check on this rough estimate is afforded by the fact that the Service of Youth, now in its fifth year, costs, exclusive of provision in kind (i.e. free use or use at nominal rent of accommodation and equipment), somewhere about the same figure. But it should be remembered that the expenditure by the local authorities on the

Service of Youth has risen steeply each year ; the cost of citizen centres might be expected to rise equally steeply. And as the scheme developed there would be for a while increasing capital expenditure. Actually the expenditure should be regarded in the light of an exceedingly profitable investment. There is no stock which is capable of paying higher dividends than human stock, and the rapid development of citizen centres would prove the surest means of securing a highly educated people. And, as the Prime Minister has warned us, it is to the highly educated peoples that the future will belong. Consequently, this expenditure should not be regarded only as a profitable investment ; it is also a necessary one.

That we may survive as a free and independent people during the coming twenty-five years ; that we may rise to the height of the great mission which lies before Britain ; for both these purposes universal adult education is a prime and immediate necessity for us. "Some things happen in this world because people with thought make them happen." It is for us now to have the thought, and to take the action, that will make this thing happen.

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